

## Message Text

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13  
ACTION ARA-10

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R 101920Z SEP 76  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1312

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EO 11652: N/A  
TAGS: CI, PINS, SHUM  
SUBJECT: CHILEAN DETAINEES: WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE DAWSON  
ISLAND GROUP?

1. AFTER THE 1973 COUP THE GOC SENT 39 DETAINEES TO A WORK CAMP ON ISOLATED AND INHOSPITABLE DAWSON ISLAND, IN THE STRAITS OF MAGELLAN. A FEW WERE INSIGNIFICANT ALLENDE SUPPORTERS, BUT MOST WERE IMPORTANT AND CONTROVERSIAL FIGURES. THEY WERE BROUGHT TO THE SANTIAGO AREA IN MAY 1974 AND THEN PUT INTO A SPECIAL CAMP -- RITOQUE -- NEAR VALPARAISO. RELEASES WERE MADE GRADUALLY SO THAT NOW THE GOC HOLDS ONLY SEVEN OF THE ORIGINAL 39.

2. WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONFIRM THE EXPULSION FROM CHILE OF 23 OF THE GROUP. THREE, FREED UNCONDITIONALLY, APPARENTLY STILL LIVE HERE. ONE DIED IN DETENTION. WE LOST TRACK OF FIVE.

3. OF THE SEVEN WE KNOW WHO ARE STILL DETAINED, FIVE ARE BEING HELD WITHOUT CHARGE UNDER STATE OF SIEGE AUTHORITY. LUIS CORVALAN, EX-SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCCH), IS THE BEST KNOWN. JOSE CADEMARTORI, A PCCH MEMBER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE IN CHARGE OF ALLENDE'S LAND REFORM PROGRAM, IS ANOTHER HIGH VISIBILITY CASE. DANIEL VERGARA (PCCH MEMBER AND ALLENDE'S UNDER SECRETARY OF INTERIOR)

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AND SOCIALIST ALFREDO JOIGNANT (ALLENDE'S DIRECTOR OF

"INVESTIGACIONES" -- PLAINCLOTHED, INCLUDING POLITICAL -- POLICE) ARE OF UNDERSTANDABLE SENSITIVITY. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE GOC HAS AGAINST TITO PALESTRO, A SOCIALIST WHO WAS MAYOR OF THE SANTIAGO SUBURB OF SAN MIGUEL, BUT HE IS PROBABLY INVOLVED IN CHARGES OF WHITE COLLAR CRIME.

4. TWO SOCIALISTS -- THE OTHER TWO IN PRISON -- ARE SERVING LONG SENTENCES IMPOSED AT THE 1974 AIR FORCE TRIAL. CARLOS LAZO, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRAL BANK AND ALLENDE'S LIAISON WITH THE LOYAL MILITARY, IS IN PRISON FOR 30 YEARS. HE IS THE ONLY DAWSON ISLANDER STILL BEING HELD WHO HAS BEEN ACCEPTED FOR PAROLE INTO THE UNITED STATES. ERIC SCHNAKE IS SERVING A TWENTY-FIVE YEAR SENTENCE. HE APPLIED FOR OUR PAROLE PROGRAM BUT WAS DENIED.

5. DAWSON ISLAND NOTABLES RELEASED OR EXPELLED INCLUDE SOCIALISTS CLODOMIRO ALMEYDA AND ORLANDO LETELIER, RADICALS ANIBAL PALMA AND ANSELMO SULE, AND COMMUNISTS ENRIQUE KIRBERG AND EDGARDO ENRIQUEZ (FATHER OF THE DEAD MIR LEADERS). RECENT EXILES ARE FERNANDO FLORES (SANTIAGO 7491) AND PEDRO FELIPE RAMIREZ (SANTIAGO 4544).

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THESE MEN ARE NOT TYPICAL DETAINEES, THE FATE OF THE DAWSON ISLANDERS HIGHLIGHTS GOC POLICY REGARDING POLITICAL DETENTIONS. SLOWLY, ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, AND IN THEIR CASES OFTEN AFTER SIGNIFICANT OUTSIDE PRESSURE, MOST HAVE BEEN EXPELLED OR FREED. THOUGH THEIR TREATMENT WAS INITIALLY HARSH, THE GOC HAS A POINT WHEN IT ASSERTS THAT IN MANY COUNTRIES THEY WOULD NOT HAVE FARED AS WELL. ON THE OTHER HAND, MOST NEVER VIOLATED CHILEAN LAWS, AND THEIR DETENTION WAS BASED ON POLITICAL RATHER THAN ACTUAL SECURITY GROUNDS.  
POPPER

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